(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 prescribes a simple procedure for redressal of consumer disputes taking into account the fact that the complainant is an average consumer. Since only the principles of natural justice and summary trials are to be adoped by the consumer fora in disposal of complaints, the complainants is neither required to engage a legal practitioner nor is it obligatory under the Act. However, in order to assist complainants, who are poor, the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) appoints *Amicus Curiae,* whenever considered necessary.

Black marketing

†2626. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to check black marketing of vegetables and fruits (particularly onions) in the country;

(b) whether people of the country are suffering due to black marketing and farmers are not getting their due profits and common man has to pay double or triple price while purchasing fruits and vegetables; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 is being implemented by the State Governments/Union Territory (UT) Administrations. The Act empowers the Central and State Governments to detain persons whose activities-are found to be prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies of commodities essential to the community.

Onion which was declared as essential commodity *vide* Notification dated 29th June, 1999 has since been deleted from the list of the essential commodities *vide* Notification dated 25th November, 2004.

No reports regarding Black-marketing of vegetables and fruits (particularly onions) have been received from any State Governments/UT

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Administrations. The difference between the return to the farmers and the retail prices for various vegetables and fruits depend on various factors such as the type of commodity, its perishability, distance from markets etc.

Setting up of Commodity Exchanges

2627. SHRI JANADHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER
AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to set up Commodity Exchanges in the country as part of its proposal to reform the commodities markets, whereby farmers would be free to sell their foodgrains anywhere they want to; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Shortfall in Sugar Production

2628. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether annual sugar production is expected to fall to12.5 million tonnes during the current sugar season October, 2004 to September, 2005;

(b) if so, whether it is against 40 million tonnes recorded during the last year;

(c) if so, whether India would go out for imports as the shortfall in output will put pressure on prices of domestic level;

(d) the steps Government propose to take to meet the shortage of sugar in the country; and